

Lark, White-rumped Shrike, Lazuli Bunting, American Bittern, Belted Kingfisher, Yellow-headed Blackbird, Western Gull, Turkey Vulture.

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## NOVEMBER ASPECTS IN SPOKANE COUNTY, WASHINGTON.

BY W. LEON DAWSON.

The city of Spokane, now boasting some 75,000 inhabitants, is situated in a region of peculiar interest to the student of Washington birds, and as yet very little has been published relating to the ornithology of this northeastern section. The interest is largely due to the still undefined Rocky Mountain element in the avifauna of Spokane County; and the scarcity of published material is my only excuse for presenting the following meager notes, gathered at random during what is possibly the dulllest month of the year, November. Four weeks spent in the "Imperial City" allowed the writer three Saturday half-holidays at nearby resorts, and occasional glimpses besides of the birds about town.

The country immediately surrounding Spokane consists largely of lava benches and ridges, covered with a light growth of yellow pine, and is further diversified by several deep-cut river beds. Upon the east its timbered hills connect with the mountain system of Idaho; while upon the west its gentler slopes are largely surrendered to the plow. In the city itself, Corbin Hill, with its handsome residences and its artistically neglected corners, affords asylum to many species of birds; and very commendable attention is being paid, not only here but elsewhere in town, to the summer housing and the winter feeding of the gallant Troubadours.

Blinding frosts, occurring regularly through the month, have warned away the less hardy birds, while the almost constant sunshine of the middle day has rewarded the sturdier sort who stay. No premature outburst of cold has occurred to drive in the regular winter pensioners from the north,—the Snowflakes, the Bohemian Waxwings, and their ilk,—but as I write, on the 25th, the snow is falling and the official change from

fall to winter is being recorded. The altitude is 2,000 feet, so we are on the normal snow line for the season.

1. *Lophodytes cuculatus*. Hooded Merganser.—One seen in Medical Lake.

2. *Mareca americana*. Baldpate.—Little Medical Lake. The commonest market bird at this season.

3. *Clangula islandica*. Barrow's Golden-eye.—A flock of a dozen males and another of three females on Little Medical Lake.

4. *Ortyx virginianus*. Bob-white.—Two large coveys seen near town. Said to be thoroughly established hereabouts.

5. *Buteo borealis calurus*. Western Red-tail.—A small bird with an unusually stiff, sluggish flight was repeatedly flushed from the tops of pine trees near Little Medical.

6. *Bubo virginianus saturatus* (?). Dusky Horned Owl.—Only one seen. Not common.

7. *Ceryle alcyon*. Kingfisher.—Two flying about Hangman Creek, Nov. 4th.

8. *Dryobates pubescens homorus*. Batchelder Woodpecker.—One seen. The pure whites of this bird are strikingly noticeable as compared with *D. p. gairdnerii* found further west.

9. *Colaptes cafer collaris*. Red-shafted Flicker.—Common. Have seen a dozen at once. And still the uncircumcised call him "Yellow-hammer."

10. *Otocoris alpestris arctica*. Alaska Horned Lark.—A close study of a dozen individuals has left no question as to the prevailing form. These birds have evidently displaced *O. a. merrilli* for the winter.

11. *Pica pica hudsonica*. Black-billed Magpie.—Common. They wander about the country in loose companies containing a score of birds apiece, but persecution has taught them great discretion, and one hears oftenest the subdued query and comment of invisible birds.

12. *Nucifraga columbiana*. Clarke's Nutcracker.—Two seen in Minnehaha Park.

13. *Sturnella magna neglecta*. Western Meadowlark.—Two seen near Lark Street, on the 20th.

14. *Euphagus cyanocephalus*. Brewer's Blackbird.—One flock encountered near Little Medical Lake on the 11th.

15. *Hesperiphona vespertina montana*. Western Evening Grosbeak.—The Coccothraustine yell, unmistakable to the initiated, was once heard on Carnen Hill, Nov. 20th.

16. *Loxia* sp. A few Crossbills were seen flying about in a snowstorm, Nov. 25.

17. *Acanthis linaria*. Redpoll.—Not yet common.

18. *Astragalinus tristis pallidus*. Pale Goldfinch.—A troop seen Nov. 4th were feeding upon fallen sunflower seeds. The colors

of the plumage appear sharp-cut and fresh. The wings and tail show much pure white, and the yellow proper is now confined to the throat and sides of head and neck.

19. *Passer domesticus*. English Sparrow.—A very quiet resident. The hoodlum evidently recognizes the fact that he is still in the minority and deports himself accordingly. A number of the local bird-lovers are unaware of his presence in the city.

20. *Junco* sp. Heard repeatedly but not seen, at Silver Lake.

21. *Melospiza cinerea montana*. Mountain Song Sparrow.—It may be counted presumptuous to enter the lists of the trinomialists armed only with a pair of binoculars, but I was instantly impressed with the differences of a Song Sparrow seen on the 4th at Garden Springs. In this bird the general tone of coloration was much lighter than in typical *merrilli*, with which I had abundant opportunity to compare it a moment later. Its ashy gray and brown of head contrasted strongly. The ashy of back and scapulars was very extensive, the brown areas of the feathers occupying not above one-third of the total space. Under-parts clearer white; streaks lighter rusty and more sharply defined, more narrow on sides than in *M. c. merrilli*.

22. *Melospiza cinerea merrilli*. Merrill Song Sparrow.—The common bird, reputed to be sparingly resident throughout the winter.

23. *Lanius borealis*. Northern Shrike.—Heard near Medical Lake.

24. *Dendroica auduboni*. Audubon's Warbler.—Two birds were seen lingering about a pleasant orchard near the bank of the Spokane River, Nov. 20.

25. *Cinclus mexicanus*. Water Ouzel.—A pair were seen splashing about unconcernedly at the brink of one of the local waterfalls, those Samsons which are grinding out flour and power in this prison house of Spokane's prosperity. These romantic watersprites seemed singularly out of place amidst the prosaic brulling of turbines and rollers—like "poor Lo" trudging bare-footed and awe-stricken beneath the skyscrapers. But also, like the Red man, the Ouzel was "here first."

26. *Certhia familiaris montana* (?). Rocky Mountain Creeper.—One specimen heard and seen on a pine-clad hillside at dusk.

27. *Sitta carolinensis aculeata*. Slender-billed Nuthatch.—A very contented dweller in pine trees, usually found associated with its congeners.

28. *Sitta canadensis*. Red-breasted Nuthatch.—Fairly common, occurring singly or in pairs as often as in the troupe.

29. *Sitta pygmæa*. Pygmy Nuthatch.—Strictly social in its habits: its twitterings are a pretty sure sign that you have come upon the main army of minute bug-hunters, for which you may have been searching diligently for the past hour and more.

30. *Penthestes atricapillus septentrionalis*. Long-tailed Chickadee.—Perhaps the birds seen really belong to the Columbian "island" of *atricapillus* proper, but they appear to me lighter in tone, with more of white edging on wing and tail.

31. *Penthestes gambeli*. Mountain Chickadee.—Active members of the Amalgamated Push.

32. *Regulus satrapa olivaceus*. Golden-crowned Kinglet.—Not so common as on Puget Sound. Only once seen, on a densely thicketed hillside.

33. *Merula migratoria propinqua*. Western Robin.—Several lingering about the orchards and shade trees of Cannon Hill.

34. *Sialia mexicana occidentalis*. Western Bluebird.—Still common locally; a dozen seen Nov. 20th. These birds are undoubtedly intergrades and possibly deserve to be classed as *S. m. bairdi*.

Seattle, Wash.

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## THE YELLOW-BREASTED CHAT IN MICHIGAN.

P. A. TAVERNER.

Southern Michigan marks the extreme northern limit of the range of the Yellow-breasted Chat in the Middle West. They can hardly be regarded in the state as common or regular visitors, except locally. They must be viewed as intrusive forms from the Carolinian Fauna to the south of us that have, for the past decade or so, been extending their range northward. In the past, they have appeared here occasionally under peculiar and, as yet, unknown conditions, persisting for a while, and then vanishing more or less completely for a greater or less period of time.

The causes of these intrusions and disappearances are still beyond explanation. They seem to come and go according to no law, rule or set of conditions. That they are but accidental and the result of chance no scientific man will for a moment admit; but the complexity of the conditions renders the solution very difficult indeed. In many cases, such investigation involves an exhaustive study of the conditions prevalent over the winter ranges of the individuals in question; and until we have positive data regarding where the different individuals of the various northern races spend their winters we cannot hope for any great success along these lines. It may be well to call attention to the fact that these occurrences